

## Col. Benton—Oregon—The Great North American Route to India.

COMMERCIAL ASIA.—Sought after by all nations.—Ancient channels of this commerce.—Modern channels.—New route proposed for the people of the United States by the Columbia and Missouri rivers.—Practicability of this route—Preference due to it, in shortness of distance; in safety; in cheapness of transportation; in substituting an exchange of commodities for a trade in gold and silver.—Other advantages, in rendering the Asiatic commerce of the republic independent of Europe; in giving to the republic the command of the north Pacific ocean; in giving to the republic the monopoly of the East India trade.—Effect of this monopoly on the wealth and power of the republic—on the wealth and power of England; on the wealth and power of Russia; on the religious and political condition of the people of Asia.—Effect of the military expedition to the upper Missouri in laying open the new route.—Effect of an American for company in turning the East India trade into the new route.—Project of a fur company with a view to that object.—Idea of the value and present condition of the fur trade in North America, as carried on by the English; by the Russians; by the Americans.—Certain establishment of the new route immediately with the aid of the American government, eventually by the force of circumstances and the natural progress of events.

I. COMMERCIAL ASIA.—Spices, aromatics, precious stones, porcelains, silks and tea are the articles of Asiatic commerce. Silver and gold are the articles with which they are purchased. From the earliest ages of the world the precious metals have flowed into Asia; and this drain, which has been incessant for several thousand years, has become still more enormous in latter times. The Americans alone have carried twelve millions to eastern Asia within the last year, eight millions of which were carried to Canton and exchanged for tea, silk, porcelain and cottons. This course of trade has occasioned a prodigious accumulation of the precious metals in eastern Asia; for what is carried there remains there, there being nothing in the commercial or political relations of the countries to create a counter current, and bring it back into Europe or America. To stop this drain and substitute for it a trade in barter would be an object of the first interest with any country, especially with the United States, which have no mines to supply a drain so incessant and so enormous. To go further, to create a change which would draw back a part of the gold and silver which has accumulated in Asia, would be a commercial operation which no nation has yet accomplished, and which would open a vein of unvalued richness. Both of these operations are practicable, not by the Europeans, who have nothing which they can substitute for silver; or by the Americans, who follow the track of the European into Europe. Yet there are articles for which the Asiatics would not only give the rich productions of their country, but freely exchange their gold and silver, if brought into their market by any nation. These articles are FURS and BEADS. Of the former Europe has none to send; of the latter but little; and if she had any to spare, her geographical position, the vast distance which intervenes, would prevent her exporting them. America on the contrary abounds in both these articles: the first has been blindly abandoned to our enemies; the second has not been carried to Asia because the Americans severally follow the track of the Europeans, and are still more remote than they from the seat of commerce. An American navigator sails to the east, traverses 30,000 miles of sea, doubles a stormy and treacherous Cape, and arrives at the coast which is called the East Indies. In the meantime what was the EAST INDIES to the ancients are the WEST INDIES to the Americans; for they lie to the west of us, and but a few days sail from our own coast. The western shore of North America and the eastern shore of Asia, front each other, the mild and tranquil waves of the Pacific ocean alone intervene; in the broadest part as narrow as the Straits of Gibraltar, and in the narrowest as wide as the Gulf of Mexico. Instead of being the Straits of the Straits, only thirty miles apart. Instead of going to the east, Americans should therefore go to the west to arrive in Asia; and taking that route they would immediately be able to carry furs and beads into the markets of Asia, the first of which is now pillaged from them by Englishmen and Russians, the latter would have to be raised from the fertile banks of the Columbia river.

II. Sought after by all Nations.—During thirty centuries the nations of the earth have looked to Asia in search of its rich commerce. Sacred and profane history exhibit the same picture, of merchants loaded with gold and silver, traversing the deserts on camels, or the trackless sea in ships, in search of the rich productions in the east. From the time of the Phoenicians to the English of the present day, the countries of eastern Asia have been the chief theatres of commercial enterprise; and the nation which shared this commerce in the highest degree, has acquired in all ages the first rank in the arts, the sciences, in national power and individual wealth. And such will probably be the case to the end of the world. Nature has made but one Asia, but one country abounding with the rich products which are found in the East Indies; and while mankind continues to love spices and aromatics, precious stones, porcelains, fine cottons, silks and tea, the trade with Asia must continue to be sought after as the brightest jewel in the diadem of commerce.

III. Ancient Channels of this Commerce.—These may be traced by the ruins of the great cities which grew to the possession of this trade and perished with its loss. Tyre, "Queen of cities," was its first emporium. The commerce of the east centred there before the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, upwards of six hundred years before the coming of Christ, (Rollin.) She traded to Arabia, Persia, and India. Her route was by the Mediterranean sea to the coast of Egypt, over land to the Red Sea, and thence by sailing to the Gulf of Suez, and thence east, down the Red Sea, by coasting voyages to the countries about the Gulf of Persia and mouths of the river Indus. The possession of this commerce made Tyre the richest and the proudest city in the universe; gave her the command of the seas; "made her traffickers the honorees of the earth," (Isaiah,) and enabled her merchants to dispute with Kings of the East for the riches of the East, and the vastness of their expenses. Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, conquered Tyre, and razed it to its foundations; but he did not find a rival city, and the continuance of the India trade immediately restored the "Queen of the cities," to all her former degree of power and pre-eminence. Alexander conquered her again, founded a rival city on the coast of Egypt, and Tyre was "a place for fishermen to dry their nets." (Ezekiel.)

The Jews in the time of David and Solomon succeeded to the India trade. Their route was the same which the Phoenicians followed from Tyre, and their country became the theatre of wealth, and their Kings the arbiters of the surrounding nations. In the reign of Darius Hyaspes, King of Persia, a new route was opened with India by the Persian Gulf, and the Persian Gulf was the chief sea to the borders of Persia through the Caspian sea, up the river Oxus to the mountains which divide it from the river Indus, across those mountains with the aid of the Bactrian camel, and thence down the river Indus to the countries about its mouth, then the chief seat of the India trade, and the limit of the ancients in their trade to the east. This route covered a distance of three thousand miles: 600 on the Caspian sea, 900 on Oxus, 200 or 300 over land crossing the mountains, and about 1200 on the river Indus.

The foundation of Alexandria created a new emporium and opened a new route from the commerce of the east, chosen with so much judgment that it continued to be followed from the time of Alexander the Great, upwards of 300 years before the Christian era, till the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope in the 15th century. This channel was along the canal of Alexandria to the Nile, up the Nile to Coptus, thence across the desert with camels to the Red Sea, and thence a coasting voyage to the mouths of the Indus. The Romans, in the flourishing times of the republic, and of the empire, were supplied of India goods through this channel.

In the same age another channel was opened with India. It lay over land, across the desert from the bottom of the Mediterranean sea to the river Euphrates, down that river to the Gulf of Persia, and thence by the usual coasting voyage to the mouths of the Indus. The distance between the sea and the Euphrates (two hundred miles) required a station between them. It was found in a grove of palm trees, a fertile spot well watered, in the midst of sands, and far away from the sea and the river. Its inhabitants entered with ardor into the trade of conveying commodities from the river to the sea. As the most valuable productions of India, brought up the Euphrates, were of such small bulk, the passage was to bear the expense of a long land carriage, this trade soon became so considerable that the opulence and

power of Palmyra increased rapidly. (Robertson.) Its government was best suited to the genius of a commercial city. The Romans, (Pliny the elder,) report that they began to exhibit the wonders of which commerce is capable. From a trading station it became an opulent city, the capital of a great empire, the seat of science and the arts, the rival of Rome. Rome would bear no rival. One of the most powerful of the emperors (Aurelian) carried the arms of the empire against the "city of commerce." Palmyra was subdued; its trade diverted to other channels; and the ruins of temples attest the admiration of the traveller on the spot which was once the seat of so much power and magnificence. (Volney.)

After the conquest of Egypt by the Mahomedans, the people of the Roman empire were shut out from the port of Alexandria. This gave rise to the opening of a new channel for the India trade. Constantine became an emporium. This route lay through the Black Sea to the mouth of the river Phasis; up that river and by a land carriage of five days to the river Cyrus, down to the Caspian sea; across this sea 300 miles, to the mouth of the river Oxus; up that river 900 miles, to the city of Maracanda, now Samarcand; thence across the mountains to the countries about the river Indus, or, as it is now called, by eighty or a hundred years, by the Bactrian camel, through desert countries and wandering nations which considered the merchant as their prey, to the western provinces of the Chinese empire, (Pliny the elder.) This route, though long and perilous, made Constantinople the emporium of the India trade for all Christian nations for several centuries after the conquest of Egypt and the fall of the Roman empire.

IV. Modern Channels.—Constantinople continued to be the emporium of the India trade till the 15th century. The Venetians and Genoese engaged in it. They established trading houses in Constantinople, and rose to power and pre-eminence from the profits of this trade. These facts are well known to the rest of Europe, and the citizens of these republics displayed a magnificence in their living which surpassed the state of the greatest monarchs beyond the Alps. (Robertson.) From Venice and Genoa the commerce of Asia spread into the rest of Europe. Bruges and Antwerp became its emporia, and retain to this day evident signs of its wealth and splendor to which they attained. This was the longest and most perilous route over which the commerce of India has been conducted. It is truly astonishing to think of it, from Bruges and Antwerp, to Genoa and Venice; thence to Constantinople; across the Black sea; across the Caspian sea; up the river Oxus to Samarcand, the limit of Alexander's march towards the northeast of Asia; and at Samarcand it seemed that the journey was only beginning, as there commenced the voyage overland through the Bactrian camel, through desert regions and nations of robbers, to be continued from eighty to an hundred days to arrive in the western provinces of China, where the most valuable productions of the east were then found. Yet so great were the profits of the trade that under all these disadvantages the cities of Constantinople, of Venice and Genoa, of Bruges and Antwerp, became the seats of learning and refinement, of luxury and magnificence, of maritime and military power, when all other parts of Europe were sunk in poverty and ignorance, darkness and barbarism.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century, the Cape of Good Hope was discovered. A new route was then opened into India. The Portuguese, who made this discovery, became the masters of the India trade, destroyed the fleets of the Turks and Venetians which were launched upon the Red Sea to keep open the ancient channel through Egypt, and established a commercial empire in India. Portugal then became one of the most powerful nations by sea and land, and Lisbon the centre of European wealth and commerce.

The passage by the Cape of Good Hope (sometimes by Cape Horn) has since continued to be the route of India. The Portuguese did not long retain their monopoly. The Dutch became their competitors, and soon after, their successors, in the India trade. Portugal declined to its original insignificance. Holland rose to wealth and power by sea and land, and Amsterdam became its principal mart.

The English followed the Dutch, and have surpassed all their predecessors in the successful prosecution of the India trade. A company of their merchants have erected an empire in India, maintained fleets and armies, subjugated vast empires, dethroned powerful monarchs, disposed of kingdoms and principalities as other merchants dispose of sales of goods, and have been the chief theatre of commerce in the highest degree, has acquired in all ages the first rank in the arts, the sciences, in national power and individual wealth. And such will probably be the case to the end of the world. Nature has made but one Asia, but one country abounding with the rich products which are found in the East Indies; and while mankind continues to love spices and aromatics, precious stones, porcelains, fine cottons, silks and tea, the trade with Asia must continue to be sought after as the brightest jewel in the diadem of commerce.

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ment, and still occupies its attention. Numerous squadrons have been sent out, and repeatedly attempted the passage, sometimes from the northwest by the Bering's straits, sometimes by the northeast through Hudson's bay and Davis's straits. The multiplied efforts to discover this passage show the value which the English place on the discovery of a direct route to Asia. But they have not confined themselves to sea voyages. Taking up the idea of La Salle, they have sought an inland passage by means of rivers and lakes. This project was suggested by McKenzie. Confined to the northern parts of our continent, he could only prosecute his discoveries north of the heads of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. He was confined to high northern latitudes, but succeeded in pointing out the existence of a water communication, with a few portages, from Hudson's bay, north latitude 55 to the Pacific ocean, in the north latitude 46. The Mississippi, the Peace river, the Columbia, and some lakes, formed the means of his communication, and little useful as it would seem to us in a latitude so high, it was deemed a discovery of great moment by the English. McKenzie received the honor of knighthood for his enterprise; the British fur traders immediately began to export their furs to China by the direct route of the Columbia, and the privilege of navigating that river for ten years has been secured to them by treaty.

The Missouri river above the Mandan villages was yet unknown. From the mouth of the Mississippi a man of genius projected its discovery. In 1790 the Baron de Carondelet, Governor General of Louisiana, planned an expedition to the sources of the Missouri, and thence to the Pacific ocean. It was the expedition of Charles IV. King of Spain. A liberal compensation was offered by the King, and the Baron announced an additional reward of three thousand dollars to the persons who should first see the great ocean. The expedition was undertaken by Don Jacques Clamorgan, an enterprising citizen of St. Louis, who prosecuted it some distance up the Missouri, at great expense, but without accomplishing the views of the Spanish Government.

A few years afterwards Louisiana changed its master. The eyes of Mr. Jefferson turned the direction of so many eminent men, were turned upon the Pacific ocean, and under his auspices the labors of Lewis and Clark have demonstrated the existence of a water communication, with a few portages, through the heart and centre of the Republic from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The rivers Columbia, Missouri, and Ohio form this line, and open a channel to Asia, short, direct, safe, cheap, and exclusively American, which invites the enterprise of American citizens, and promises to them a splendid participation in the commerce of the East.

VI. Practicability of this Route.—The new route will consist of four parts: 1. A sea voyage across the North Pacific Ocean. 2. A river navigation up the Columbia. 3. A land carriage across the Rocky Mountains. 4. A river navigation descending the Missouri. The practicability of each will be briefly considered.

1.—The voyage across the Pacific. This would be neither long nor difficult. The Pacific ocean between Asia and America is not broader than the Atlantic. Vessels of sixty tons (not half the size of those which navigate our rivers) have repeatedly crossed it in safety. The British have many vessels upon it engaged in the fur trade between Asia and America. The expense of running a ship on this sea is also inconsiderable. The voyage being almost direct east and west, and but little danger to be apprehended from tempests, few more sailors are wanted than sufficient to set the sails at the commencement, and to take them down at the termination of the voyage. Steamboats especially would be well adapted to the navigation of this placid ocean, and when schooner rigged, would have the combined advantage of steam power and sails.

LATER FROM TEXAS.—By an arrival at New Orleans from Galveston, we have four days later from Texas. There is no intelligence of interest received from Gen. Taylor's army.

We learn from the Galveston News, of the evening of the 14th instant, that several individuals having followed Gen. Taylor's army against his orders, were immediately pressed into the army, and required to be sent to the front. This being exactly what they wanted, a good many of them have followed, both by the Gulf route, and on flatboats down the Laguna de Madre. We see no reason to doubt that Gen. Taylor still remains in peaceable and undisturbed possession of the left bank of the Rio Grande.

The Houston Star of the 9th instant says that the country along the coast has been visited by remarkably severe storms, and the torrents of rain that had fallen, have, it is feared, seriously injured the crops in many places.

The legislative intelligence from Austin, with one exception, is devoid of general interest. In obedience to a resolution, the Comptroller furnished the Governor with a statement of the probable annual expenses of the State of Texas. The total expenses are enumerated as follows:

Legislative.....	\$29,191 46
Executive.....	31,100 00
Judiciary.....	24,150 00
Pensions and Annuities.....	1,422 00
Total.....	\$85,763 46
Amount of money in the Treasury.....	\$8,400 00
Amount paid over, but not yet deposited.....	2,750 00
	\$11,150 00

NOT QUITE RUINED.—From the report of the city Inspector, just published, it appears that 1980 new buildings were erected in the city of New York, in the year 1845; a greater number than were ever before erected in one year. The number of buildings erected in 1836 were 1836 new buildings. This number included all that were required to supply the places of those destroyed by the great fire of December, 1835. To show how much greater was the addition to our city in the year 1845, than any former year, we give the number of buildings erected, in a few of the past years.

In 1834 there were erected.....	577
1835.....	1259
1836.....	1836
1837.....	840
1838.....	781
1839.....	674
1840.....	890
1841.....	912
1842.....	1210
1843.....	1080

So many "digging out" that seems to be going on in so many directions, especially in the upper wards, it is probable that the number of buildings in 1846, will equal those of 1845. The fire of last summer served to swell the aggregate of 1845 a little, and the increased number in 1836, four or five hundred. Our city, therefore, never went ahead as rapidly as it did in 1845. And now, since we are to have no war with John Bull, and the Sub-Treasury is not going to break any bones, we cannot see why its growth should be retarded. A much better class of buildings too were erected in 1845, than in any former year.—N. Y. Jour. of Com.

We are pained to learn through the last Goshen Democrat, of the death on the 21st ult., of Mrs. Mary Maria, wife of Dr. Ellis, editor of that paper. Her illness was long and distressing, but borne with uncommon fortitude and resignation. Rev. Mr. Avery presided at the funeral service, to a large assemblage of the day after her death. Dr. Ellis speaks in his paper most feelingly of his bereavement, and he has our warmest and most heartfelt sympathies for him in this trying affliction.—St. Jo. Register.

## FOREIGN ITEMS.

From the Liverpool Mercury 10th inst.  
"There is little doubt that the offer from our Government which went out by the Caledonia last Saturday—for it did so notwithstanding the ignorance of our slow commercial contemporaries on the subject—will be accepted and finally settle this important and long-pending [the Oregon] question."

OREGON.—The article in the last number of the Quarterly Review, on the subject of Oregon, is beginning to attract attention, now that the lobby of the House of Commons is fast subsiding. The gist of the article is to promote a compromise, and the reviewer would be content with the forty-ninth parallel. We have contended from the first that any fair settlement of the dispute would be hailed with avidity by the English people, in order to avoid the horrible consequences which an appeal to force would produce; and the semi-official character of the article to which we allude, embodying the feelings of the great conservative party on the subject is confirmatory of our views.

The arrival at Havre with New York papers to the 18th ult., brings the debates in Congress, on this subject, three weeks later than the previous packet. The ultra Oregon men appear to be losing ground, and the general feeling of the country as a whole, of Congress, is in favor of a compromise. The result, indeed, is generally believed here that the dispute is virtually settled. We sincerely hope that this is not an assumption, but a fact.—Wilmington & Smith's Times.

LIVERPOOL, April 11.—The Treasury order for releasing goods under the new tariff at the reduced duties, has made the Custom House a scene of much commotion during the present week. The amount of duties received has been heavy—a proof that the commercial world regard the ultimate success of Peel's measures as certain. Vast quantities of Indian corn continue to be released from bond for trans-shipment to Ireland.

There are 22 lieutenant colonels, 25 majors, 132 captains, 118 lieutenants, 11 ensigns, and 42 medical officers, of the East India Company's service, on leave in Great Britain and Ireland. They are all ordered to join their regiments forthwith.

In 1839, the number of marriages in England and Wales, was 123,161; in 1840, 122,663; and in 1842, 118,825, of which 110,041, were according to the rites of the established Church.

The new screw for the Great Britain steamship weighs seven tons.

We take the following paragraphs from the London correspondence of the N. Y. Journal of Commerce:

The Protectionists have at last selected a leader for their party in the House of Commons, and certainly not before the time, for when they left Peel, or when Peel left them, they made an affair of their position. Curiosity, of course, will be felt on your side of the Atlantic to know who this person thus distinguished is, what are his qualifications for such a post, and also what have been his pursuits, merits and fame, hitherto. It is my duty therefore to inform you, that the dignity of the starvation leadership in the Commons, has been very properly bestowed upon Lord George Bentinck, major in the army, member for Lynn, and second son of the Duke of Portland. His Lordship has not been known in the House as a man of business; or even as a casual debater, though he has always lent his willing aid, by voice and vote, to stifle all inquiry relative to the Corn and Game laws. He has, however, a name, but it is quite in a different field from that of politics.

The noble lord has, however, no talents for racing and racing, and is looked upon as the highest Newmarket authority. I believe he is president of the Jockey Club, and has the singular honor of having transported more poor men for poaching hares and pheasants, than any half dozen of his brother protectionists. As yet he has not displayed any very remarkable aptitude for his office, or any very sterling ability. He speaks fluently and with considerable fluency, at times assuming the blustering style, a habit caught, perhaps, from the fraternity of horse dealers and blacklegs with whom he necessarily comes in union upon the turf. His great speech, if so it can be called, was upon the timber duties; but it contained nothing but the usual fallacies, and scarcely a line worthy of notice except the following: "Great alarm, his lordship said, had been created in Canada by the proposed reductions; and the people were beginning to consider whether or not they would be better to join the United States of America. He held in his hand the Montreal Gazette of the 25th of Feb., and the leading article in that paper was expressive of the same feeling. The present moment was great with us, and the time was ripe for a revolution. He was not just the time to quarrel with the colonies, when America was arming her seaboard; and when John Quincy Adams was blasphemously calling to him the word of God, as a justification for lighting up the firebrands and unleashing the hellhounds of war on our territory of Oregon."

Notwithstanding his lordship's croakings, the reduction of the timber duties was agreed to by a majority of 123, which number I have already contended is about the real bona fide majority for free trade in the House of Commons.

But to return to this leader of the monopolists. It is highly gratifying to think that no personage truly noble descended, no being with proud quarters in his arms, no individual tracing his pedigree up to its founder, famed for brilliant deeds, or glorious achievements in the field, has ventured to glorify over the miseries of his fellow men, and proffer to lead the forlorn hope against civilization, plenty and peace! Lamentable as are the faults of the peerage, of the scions belonging to ennobled houses, it is gratifying to ascertain that the old nobility of England are not enger, in the lower house, to place themselves in front of the starvation crowd.

As I told you in my letter by last steamer, the Polish insurrection is at an end; that is, for all the purposes of a national movement. But though hope is lost for the regeneration of Poland, seeds have been sown which will ripen to the use of the Austrian government. The ferocity of the Gallician peasantry, and the mass of massacres which they perpetrated upon the families of the Polish nobles, have given them a desperate and desperate hatred for Austria. The Polish nobility have been the butchered party; now, the Austrian authorities and nobles who will replace the unhappy victims, must eventually meet the same fate. A storm, too, is brewing in Germany, and sooner or later it will burst. The lesson taught to the Gallician peasantry will not be lost upon their brethren of Germany. There is too much intellect in the latter country to remain beneath the thralldom of Austria and Prussia. The monarch of Berlin seems to sniff the coming day, and has his long promised Constitution due up, secundum artem, to meet any contingency, and to be brought forward as circumstances may require. But the Emperor at Vienna has not yet set his house in order, nor has he prepared, like King Frederick William, a tub of any kind for the deluge. A revolution in the Austrian territories will be too much for him. Metternich will be enabled to control. Metternich cannot live forever, and his demise, like the death of Louis Philippe, may be taken advantage of for the purpose of carrying out those political principles of which you never read in the censored press of Austria, but for which Mazzini is in exile, and the Banianders suffered.

The policy of the present Chancellor of Austria is subtle, and, hitherto has proved successful; but smugged publications will prove more than a match for Prince Metternich and his host of 300,000 sabres and bayonets.

The German Union of Customs, which secures free trade among the states united in it, now extends from the frontiers of France and Belgium to those of Russia and Austria, and includes twenty-eight millions of people. The numerous States composing the Confederation were formerly surrounded with custom houses, and all sorts of restraints upon mutual intercourse. They now enjoy the same perfectly free trade with each other, which pervades, unites, and blesses the States of this republic.

One of the most important items of foreign news, is that Indian corn and buckwheat are to be admitted duty free at once, under an order of Council and before the Tariff bill becomes a law. This is to invite importations immediately. It also manifests the urgent necessity for an additional supply of food for the consumption of Great Britain.

There are nine distilleries in operation in Boston, employing 47 men, and a capital of \$175,000. They manufacture annually about 3,272,633 gallons of spirit, valued at \$320,000.

## Latest from the Rio Grande.

Our friend and correspondent, A. B. C., at New Orleans, has sent us, per steamboat Alexander Scott, papers containing the latest news from the Army of Occupation, the most interesting of which we copy below:

From the Galveston News, 24th inst.

LATER FROM THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION.—The schooner L. M. Hitchcock, Captain Wright, arrived yesterday morning, having left Brasos St. Iago last Sunday. We are indebted for the following information to Col. March, who came on board the Hitchcock, having left the camp of Gen. Taylor on the 15th instant.

Our former intelligence by the Hitchcock, in relation to the movement of the army to a position three or four miles below Matamoros, was materially incorrect. On the morning of the 20th ultimo, when General Taylor found himself exposed to the enemy's fire with his right and left unprotected in consequence of the peculiar bends of the river, he ordered one division of his army to take position in the bend above and the bend below the town, while with his main army he maintained the first position, where he still remains. Gen. Taylor has used all diligence to strengthen his position by throwing up breastworks, by intrenchments, fortifications, etc., and the Mexican General Ampudia has been equally industrious in fortifying the town, defensively keeping his soldiers employed night and day. Gen. Taylor's heavy ordnance of eighteen pounders, are said to be situated within point blank shot of Gen. Ampudia's house, in the middle of the city, at a distance of about 100 yards. Thus the two armies have been situated for upwards of two weeks, up to our present date, neither having committed any positive act of hostility upon the other. On the 10th instant, Col. Cross, Commissary General of the army, rode out by himself, about 10 o'clock in the morning, to the house of a German, about two miles from the army, where (as was afterwards ascertained) he was taken prisoner by a party of Mexican Rancheros. As soon as he was missing, Gen. Taylor sent a detachment of men who secured the country in search of him, but to no purpose.

Two or three days after Capt. May, of the 3d Dragoons, took a runaway negro, in the neighborhood of the same place where Col. Cross was captured; and from this negro he heard and hoped, he years in matichian Col. Cross was obtained. Immediately after, Gen. Taylor sent a messenger to the Mexican General, requesting information whether Col. Cross was a prisoner with him or not. The next day General AMPUDIA sent several officers to the American camp, with the answer that they knew nothing of Col. Cross, but that they had made Lieut. DEAS a prisoner. This officer, it appears, had previously crossed the river (but without orders), in search of Col. Cross, (who was his particular friend), and had fallen into the hands of the Mexicans. Much uncertainty and many surmises prevail in regard to the fate of Col. Cross. But the more probable opinion appears to be, that his capture was unauthorized by, and unknown to Ampudia; and it is to be feared that he has been murdered by the party by whom he was taken, and his horse, money and clothing divided among them.

On the 14th Gen. Ampudia sent a formal notice to Gen. Taylor, ordering him to leave his present position within twenty-four hours, and to evacuate the whole territory west of the Nueces, or that his refusal would be considered a declaration of war. Gen. T. immediately returned for answer that his orders were to maintain his position on the east bank of the river, and that he should do so, especially as the roads were muddy, and it was unpleasant retreating at this season. Shortly after the reception of this answer, the Mexican army partially withdrew from the town, and a portion of the troops disappeared from the west bank of the river. This closes the last act of the drama, as far as reported, that has yet been performed. This movement of the enemy is quite inexplicable to Gen. Taylor as to every body else. Col. March informs us that a report has been put in circulation that the threatened hostilities are only suspended till the first of June then to be renewed (we suppose) with redoubled energy and still more slaughter.

Gen. Taylor is prosecuting the fortifications at Point Isabel with steady perseverance. Before he returns to his labor, answer to Ampudia, he ordered the blockade of the Port of Matamoros, and directed the commanders of the Flirt and Lawrence to enforce it strictly, which was accordingly done. A vessel with a cargo of flour, having been waiting for some time for a fair wind to enter the port, was the first to break through the blockade, and was compelled to leave the market where flour is now worth forty dollars per barrel.

## Still Later.

The Telegraph, Capt. AULT, arrived at Galveston, on the 23d inst., with two days later dates from the Brasos St. Iago, and four days later from the Army of Occupation. This steampship left Brasos Iago at 10 o'clock, a.m., day before yesterday, and arrived here eight hours ago. The Captain has kindly furnished us with some memoranda, stating that on the 19th inst., Lieut. PORTER, of the 4th Regiment, (son of the late Commodore PORTER,) being out with a fatigue party of ten men, was surrounded by a party of about fifty Mexicans, (some of them wearing uniforms,) and fired upon when within a few miles of the camp. Lieut. PORTER and three of his men were killed in the attack, the rest of the party escaping, returned to the camp next day. It is stated that the guns of the Americans were wet and would not fire. We see no explanation given why this party of soldiers should be ranging the country with guns that would not fire!

Lieut. VAN NESS informs us that nothing further had been heard of Col. Cross up to the 19th, but that the general opinion is that he is still a prisoner, though not at Matamoros. He is supposed to be in the hands of the Mexicans, and is said to be in excellent discipline and eager for an engagement with the enemy. AMPUDIA's forces are reported at between three and four thousand. It is rumored that AMPUDIA is about to supersede AMPUDIA in the command.

A government express passed through Mobile on the 21st ult., with orders for Gen. Taylor. It is supposed that they relate to the recent news from Mexico.

Prentice, of the Louisville Journal, seems to be terribly alarmed at the prospect of a Mexican war against the United States. The Louisville Democrat good humoredly likens him to the redoubtable militia captain who arranged his men in due order, and harangued them as follows:—"Now, boys, if you are hard pressed, run like the d—, and, as I am a little lame, I'll start now."

Better let it be, Mr. Fisk. There are already too many magazines of the kind, and you can't shine. You are not fit for an editor of any thing. Too much wind, and no ballast. Better go to preaching or draying.

Gov. Whitcomb of Indiana has started to Ohio in search of a wife. On his return, we presume, he will open the campaign.—N. O. Delta.

He has opened "the campaign," Mr. Delta, and is now "going it, with a perfect looseness."

A DEMOCRATIC BANK.—Some doubt being justly entertained, whether such a thing as a "democratic bank" can really exist, we give the following "plan" of one, from the Galena Jeffersonian, which ought to settle the question.

Yaul—Mother earth.  
Exchanges—The transplanting of the nursery and garden.  
Deposits—The seed sown by the farmer.  
Discounts—Happiness, sobriety and manly independence.  
Assets—Smiling fields waving with a golden harvest.  
Liabilities—Indebted to God alone, who sends the sunshine and the rain.  
Dividends—Health, wealth, and honest patriotic hearts.  
We hope this may be the only kind of banks ever tolerated in the west.

Col. JOHNSON is on a visit to Washington.

The case of Commodore Crane is a sad one. His suicide is one of those strange and unaccountable things which sometimes occur. He was a man of reason. He was high in the Navy—possessed a handsome property—had reached the firm and mature age of 63—was surrounded by a family, and would seem to have had many motives to continue in life, drawn from that life itself, to say nothing of the tremendous sanctions of eternity. But some moral or physical idiosyncrasy tormented him. He had ceased to relish those things which are the ordinary objects of human pursuit and enjoyment. Friendship, fame, wealth, pleasure, business, all had ceased to charm him. He even abandoned the more dignified weapons of his profession, the pistol and the sword, and resorted to the razor. What dread moments were those when with deadly deliberation he removed his cravat, laid aside his coat, and placed a large book in an inclined position, to serve as his dying pillow. All that brave man's call ambition seemed to have died within him; and what is still more melancholy, the sacred suggestions of domestic love seem also to have expired in his desolate bosom; for in a note to Commodore Warrington, he requested that his body should be carried home, that it might be distinguished by no peculiarity of dress, that no official observances should be performed—but that it should be quietly conveyed to the nearest place of sepulture. Com. Crane has been in the United States service forty-seven years.

THE WIFE.—It needs not guilt to break a husband's life; the absence of content, the mutterings of spleen, the untidy dress, the cheerful home, the forbidding smile and deserted hearth, these and other nameless neglects, without a crime among men, have harrowed to the quick the heart of many a man, and planted there, beyond the reach of cure, the germ of dark despair. Oh! may woman, before that sad sight arises, dwell on the recollections of youth, and cherishing the